

Kaupapa Māori wellbeing framework: The basis for whānau violence prevention and intervention

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Key Messages

- Māori are over-represented in family violence statistics as both victims and perpetrators. The causes of whānau violence are acknowledged as complex and as sourced from both historical and contemporary factors. The impact of colonisation needs to be considered in order to respond effectively to whānau violence.
- Western approaches have not curbed the epidemic of whānau violence. Multi-level approaches to whānau violence prevention and intervention are more likely to achieve the best results.
- Understanding the difference between whānau and family is critical in terms of any prevention and intervention practices, policies and legislation.
- The use of cultural imperatives, for example, whakapapa, tikanga, wairua, tapu, mauri, and mana, has the potential to inform wellbeing in intimate partner and whānau relationships, transform behaviours and provide alternatives to violence. Using these imperatives can guide transformative practices and inform strategies for whānau violence prevention and whānau wellbeing. They can also be seen as protective factors within whānau, hapū and iwi.
- Culturally responsive initiatives and programmes that restore and strengthen whānau and communities should be considered as well as the individual based interventions of mainstream for Māori whānau. Kaupapa Māori conceptual frameworks, for example the Mauri Ora framework, advocate for the development of Māori models that change the way whānau violence is understood and managed.
- Successful programmes are likely to have:
 - Māori population based responses that complement the work of Māori and other community-based intervention services. These should be grounded in *te reo me ona tikanga* (Māori language and culture), underpinned by Māori values and beliefs, Māori cultural paradigms and frameworks
 - Government agencies working in close collaboration with iwi organisations to facilitate the implementation of Māori whānau violence prevention initiatives that meet the needs, priorities and aspirations of iwi
 - Funding sufficient to (a) engage leaders and staff who have the nationally and locally recognised skills to ensure successful implementation of violence prevention initiatives, and (b) to allow for local consultation and subsequent responsiveness in planned activities and projects
 - Support for capacity building opportunities for both prevention and intervention staff, including opportunities for networking, advocacy, and training
 - Māori violence prevention initiatives that are funded for research and evaluation in a way that builds local knowledge within a Māori worldview.

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Terminology

Please note that Māori words and terms have much fuller meanings than the definitions given here. These brief definitions are indicative only.

Term	Definition
Atua	Gods
Aroha	Love
Hapū	Subtribe
Iwi	Tribe
Kahupo	Having no purpose in life or spiritual blindness
Kaimahi	Worker/s
Kaupapa	Philosophy
Kaupapa Māori	By Māori, for Māori, with Māori
Kaumātua	Elder
Kōrero	Talk
Kuia	Elder
Mauri	Life principle or force
Noa	Be free from the extensions of tapu, ordinary, unrestricted
Pūkōrero	Well informed
Tapu	Sacred
Tika	What is true, just and right
Te kawa o te marae	The protocols/rules of the marae
Te ao Māori	Maori worldview
Te ao hurihuri	Contemporary influences
Tāne	Man, men
Wahine	Woman, women
Wairua	Spiritual and physical
Wānanga	Learning workshop/programme
Whenua	Land
Whakapapa	Genealogy
Whakawātea	Clearing process/response
Whānau	Māori family
Whānau ora	Wellbeing
Whānau oranga	Family wellbeing



1. Introduction

Ngā hiahia kia tītiro ki te tīmatatanga, a, ka kite ai tātou te mutunga.
You must understand the beginning if you wish to see the end.¹

Māori, like other indigenous populations, are over-represented in family violence statistics as both victims and perpetrators.²⁻⁸ Family violence within Māori populations has recently been described as an ‘epidemic’,^{6,8} with calls to all those involved to commit to supporting eliminating family violence through culturally responsive initiatives and programmes that restore whānau and communities.^{4,6,9,10} However, strategies that are based on strengthening whānau are a relatively new phenomenon in a field that is more accustomed to individual or couple-based interventions in family violence.¹¹ There is also a growing recognition of the need for a structural analysis of family violence occurring alongside the endorsement of culturally responsive initiatives and programmes.¹²⁻¹⁴

We work from the perspective that violence prevention programmes, developed out of violence research involving Western populations, do not readily translate cross-culturally or adequately address the complex range of factors that underlie the high level of violence found in indigenous communities, violence perpetuated against indigenous communities, or the development of prevention strategies.¹⁵ Complex factors include colonisation, poverty, social marginalisation, racism and ‘structural stressors’ such as unemployment. Recognition of the contribution of these factors, and the need to address them as part of violence prevention efforts began in the late 1980s. The late 1980s saw the beginnings of debates and indigenous theoretical construction with regard to violence at disproportionately high levels within indigenous communities and prevention strategies to address these issues.¹⁵

The need for this Issues Paper has arisen from concerns over the high levels of whānau violence^a in Aotearoa New Zealand, and the need to develop further understanding of

^a Kruger et al (2004) discuss the usage of ‘whānau violence’ and ‘family violence’: “In many of the social policy statements on whānau violence, whānau and family are used interchangeably. Social policy does not make the distinction between whānau and family and in fact using these terms synonymously in social policy

approaches to whānau violence prevention and intervention programmes, strategies, policies and practices.

This paper provides some context for the ‘epidemic’ of whānau violence in Aotearoa New Zealand and looks at the literature on kaupapa Māori frameworks (by Māori, for Māori, see below) and whānau violence intervention and prevention programmes.^b It provides some discussion on these approaches, highlighting existing frameworks, practice and policies that could be considered further and those that have been implemented. This paper also highlights the literature on indigenous frameworks being applied in the field of whānau violence and looks at recent initiatives by iwi and government. The views of Māori practitioners and academics on whānau violence prevention and intervention strategies are included. One kaupapa Māori conceptual framework, the Mauri Ora framework and its application, is discussed in detail.^c

The most commonly used definition of kaupapa Māori^d is by Smith (1990):²³

“Related to being Māori, is connected to Māori philosophy and principles, takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Māori and the importance of Māori language and culture, and is concerned with the struggle for autonomy over our own cultural well-being” (p.1).

The Mauri Ora framework (‘the Framework’) was chosen as the focus of this paper, because it is founded in a Māori worldview using Māori cultural values, beliefs and practices to address violence. Within this Framework, mauri ora has been defined as:

indicates that they are either not well understood or viewed as the same constructs with different languages used to describe them. The focus of this report is on whānau violence. While the Taskforce recognises the diversity of whānau, and that many Māori do not identify with whakapapa or kin based whānau, all Māori have whakapapa. It is the consciousness, acceptance and practice of it that differs”. (p.12) In this paper ‘whānau violence’ is used in reference to violence which occurs to and within Maori whānau.⁶

^b There are a number of other frameworks and programmes being utilised by Māori providers. See for example: Cram et al, 2002;¹⁶ Ministry of Social Development, 2002;¹⁷ Pihama, 2001¹⁸ and Rose, 2012.¹⁹

^c It is acknowledged that there are other commonly used kaupapa Māori frameworks including Te Whare Tapa Wha (Durie, 1994), Te Wheke (Pere, 1984) and the Dynamics of Whānau Tangata (Pa Tate, 1993). Each of these frameworks encompasses core principles that contribute towards ‘whānau ora’ (whānau well-being).

^d There are many definitions of ‘kaupapa Māori’. For further discussion see: Pihama, Cram, & Walker, 2002;²⁰ Cram, 2006;²¹ and Smith, 2005.²²



“one of a number of Māori terms for wellbeing/wellness of both the collective and the individual. It is regarded as the maintenance of balance between wairua (spiritual wellbeing), hinengaro, (intellectual wellbeing), ngākau (emotional wellbeing) and tinana (physical wellbeing)”⁶ (p.15).

The Framework was developed by Māori practitioners from across Aotearoa New Zealand. They formed the Second Māori Taskforce on Whānau Violence^e (‘the Taskforce’) to guide the analysis, practice, and prevention of whānau violence.⁶ As such, the framework came from the experiences of qualified practitioners working to ‘effective practice’ from a Māori paradigm.⁶ The Framework advocates for the development of Māori models that change the way whānau violence is understood and managed.⁶

The Framework has been developed alongside the theories of other indigenous and minority groups who have sought a better deal from mainstream society.²¹ It has been in the public domain since 2003. Following its development by the Taskforce, it was distributed for comment during a series of Whānau Development hui.⁶ The Framework has been published and referenced in many literature reviews and policy documents when discussing whānau violence prevention and intervention. It is a framework that is specific to whānau violence and Māori have expressed their affinity with the framework.⁶ It has been piloted with iwi through Te Korowai Aroha^f and is being used with considerable success, providing practitioners with skills to work proactively with Māori whānau.⁸

^e In 2002, *Transforming whānau violence: A conceptual framework* was produced by a group of experienced practitioners who came together as the Second Māori Taskforce on Whānau Violence. An updated report was produced in 2004. The Taskforce was originally convened by Hon Tariana Turia when she was Associate Minister of Māori Affairs. This Taskforce was the second to be convened to develop strategies for addressing the issues of whānau violence.

^f Te Korowai Aroha of Aotearoa is a recognised authority in the field of indigenous education and training, with 20 years in developing and implementing programmes that are kaupapa Māori driven. It is committed to assisting whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori kaimahi (workers) to utilise their cultural beliefs, values and practices in their everyday work. It has established Te Manatu Māori Tuku Tohu (Indigenous Qualifications Framework) which ensures that the principles of learning and teaching derive from a Māori worldview. These principles are mauri, mana, tapu, tikanga, wairua, whakapapa and te reo. It runs Mauri Ora training which is a training programme that equips students to work with whānau, hapū and iwi in a kaupapa Māori way by providing effective interventions particularly in the areas of whānau violence, addiction, suicide, mental health and supervision. Using the Mauri Ora framework helps students develop their own solutions when dealing with issues that arise within whānau, hapū and iwi based on an understanding of Māori culture and using cultural principles to work on transformative outcomes. Te Korowai Aroha established Project Mauri Ora in 2002 with funding from Te Puni Kōkiri. Project Mauri Ora piloted the Mauri Ora framework with iwi.



1.1 Structure of this paper

The purpose of this Issues Paper is to identify some key considerations for implementing kaupapa Māori frameworks at a government and iwi level, as well as the application of these considerations at a provider and practice level. The first section of this paper gives a description of what Māori have had to say about preventing and intervening in whānau violence. This includes the Mauri Ora framework, E Tu Whānau, and an overview of research and evaluation in this area. The next section gives an overview of both the historical and contemporary factors that explain why the Mauri Ora framework is necessary; that is, why whānau violence is a problem now. The third section discusses the implementation of the Mauri Ora framework within the Amokura programme, as an example of what the framework looks like when a violence prevention initiative gives effect to the theory, principles and values of the framework. This paper concludes with recommendations drawn from the key learnings from the Amokura programme.

2. Preventing and intervening in whānau violence

2.1 Mauri Ora imperatives

The Mauri Ora framework is a principle and values driven approach to eliminating whānau violence that gives priority to Māori knowledge in this area. The Second Māori Taskforce did not attempt to provide a definitive list of constructs, or to describe every element of effective practice encompassed by the Mauri Ora framework. Instead, the Framework links different components of tikanga to enable practitioners to interpret and apply the kaupapa in a localised context to bring about whānau wellbeing:

“The local application of this model must reside within the domains of whānau, hapū and iwi. The roles of Māori practitioners are to facilitate, educate, monitor and translate this framework into practice inside whānau, hapū and iwi – not to do it for them, but to show them how it can be done and support them to liberate themselves from the burden of whānau violence” (p.3)⁶.

The Mauri Ora imperatives of whakapapa, tikanga, wairua, tapu, mauri and mana ensure that cultural constructs from te ao Māori (Māori worldview) underpin whānau violence



prevention strategies being implemented in the realities of today's society. The following are definitions used by the Amokura Family Violence Prevention Consortium⁹ which applied these imperatives in professional development wānanga (training) to strengthen capability for kaupapa Māori practice in Te Tai Tokerau (Northland). These imperatives can be applied when working with whānau.

Table 1: Imperative definitions

Imperative	Mauri Ora framework working definition⁶ (p.17)
Whakapapa	"kinship that determines the collectivity between whānau, hapū, iwi; collective consciousness"
Tikanga	"the practice of Māori beliefs and values; collective practice"
Wairua	"spirituality expressed as awareness of wairua and passion for life; self-realisation"
Tapu	"brings us to a state of our own knowing; self-esteem"
Mauri	"inner values; sense of power, influence and identity"
Mana	"outer values; external expression of achievement, power and influence"

The Framework suggests the following three elements for bringing about a transformation from violence:⁶

- i) Te ao Māori (the Māori world) which include six cultural constructs (above) to be applied to practice: whakapapa, tikanga, wairua, tapu, mauri and mana
- ii) Te ao hurihuri (contemporary influences within today's society which undermine the practice of cultural constructs from te ao Māori) – the most significant from these is colonisation and its associated outcomes
- iii) Transformative elements (the ability to apply te ao Māori constructs into te ao hurihuri, navigating the environmental and contextual influences of society today).

The following sections describes concepts fundamental to the application of the Framework.

⁹ Further information concerning Amokura, as an example of a practical application of the Mauri Ora framework, is provided in section 5 of this document. However, the concepts outlined in this section are considered fundamental for understanding kaupapa Māori frameworks so have been presented early.

Te Aō Māori

“There is no one Tā Te Aō Māori, rather there are a collection of contributions that develop those principles which will collectively add to the philosophy of Tā Te Aō Māori”²⁴ (p.60).

The following gives some understanding and practical applications of the six cultural constructs above.^h

Whakapapa

Whakapapa is often described as the foundation of a Māori worldview. Whakapapa is the process that records the evolution and genealogical descent of all living things, the interconnectedness of relationships between people and the environment, both spiritual and physical, as well as people to each other in an ordered process.^{25,26} Therefore, whakapapa embodies the origins and nature of relationships.

“Whakapapa describes the relationships between te aō kikokiko (the physical world) and te aō wairua (the spiritual world) ... The reciprocity and obligatory nature of whakapapa means that it can be used to create productive and enduring relationships to support change. Whakapapa establishes and maintains connections and relationships and brings responsibility, reciprocity and obligation to those relationships...”⁶ (p.16).

Whakapapa establishes the identity of an individual and assists them to clarify themselves and their relationships with others. It enables the individual to understand their position in relation to their whānau, community and society and as such their roles and responsibilities.¹⁵

“The dialogue about inter-relationship between self and others is understood when a person identifies themselves. There is a weaving whitiwhiti kōrero that is laid down, to bind the human (people connections), natural (land mark identifiers) and

^h These imperatives can be described in a number of different ways and can hold different meanings; the descriptions here are used with reference to whānau violence.



spiritual (esoteric locators) dimensions of a person in their worldview as a means of highlighting their cultural identity.”²⁷ (section 2)

Traditionally whakapapa often influenced intimate partner relationships and was very important in the continued succession and protection of whānau, land and overall wellbeing. Whakapapa also ascribed roles for tāne and wahine in a variety of contexts. Often the mātāmua, or eldest in the whānau had particular roles and sometimes these roles were gender specific in the practice of tikanga. For some iwi the eldest male was expected to be the kaikōrero or speaker for the whānau. In another context, the important role of wahine as te whare tapu o te tangata (child bearers) is described and this reinforced the necessity for women to be protected as critical in the continuation of whakapapa.¹⁵

Tikanga

Tikanga is commonly described as cultural customs and practices. There are many approaches or ways of looking at tikanga Māori.

“Tikanga is the practice of Māori customs and processes founded in a Māori worldview ... Tikanga embodies Māori values and prescribes acceptable and unacceptable behaviours from a specifically Māori value base ... The application of tikanga provides the opportunity for the restoration of order, grace and mana to whānau, hapū and iwi”⁶ (p.20).

One explanation pertaining to relationships views tikanga as a means of social control to guide encounters and behaviour. Therefore, tikanga provides a guide to relationship interactions.

“Tikanga guides interpersonal relationships and provides processes and rules for engagement such as how groups are to meet and interact, and determines how individuals identify themselves. Examples of this include group processes to guide ceremonies such as hui, birth, marriage and death. It may also include guidelines for behaviour of individuals and families”²⁸ (pp.5-8).



Wairua

Wairua describes the connection between the spiritual and physical dimensions.

“The spiritual and physical bodies were joined together as one by the ‘mauri’; the manawa ora (or life essence which is imbued at birth) which gives warmth and energy to the body so that it is able to grow and develop to maturity”²⁹ (p.152).

Wairua is not easy to define as it is intangible and is often experienced as feelings. Wairua can sometimes be described in terms of the persona that a person projects. Wairua may be subject to damage through the deeds of others such as abuse, neglect, violence, drugs and rape.²⁸ When considering intimate partner relationships, it is important to acknowledge wairua and its importance in relationships and connections between people. It is also pivotal in the facilitation of healing processes.¹⁵

Tapu

When discussing intimate partner relationships it is also necessary to consider those values and beliefs which traditionally guide interpersonal interactions and behaviours such as tapu and noa. Tate (2002)³⁰ discusses three elements of the concept of tapu and within intimate partner relationships all these forms of tapu apply:

Tapu relating to value – “te tapu o te tangata,” which is intrinsic tapu by reason of being and because of links with whakapapa, whenua, iwi and atua

Tapu related to being – “te tapu i te tangata,” which is the being and wholeness of the individual, whānau and its members. It is their total well-being: spiritual, physical, psychological, cultural, educational and social wellbeing

Tapu relating to restrictions – a system of restrictions or prohibitions to ensure that in the various encounters of people there is order so that tapu is acknowledged and respected. This is often the most well recognised element of tapu (pp.2-3).

Mauri

Mauri is commonly known as the ‘life principle’ or ‘life force’. A commonly heard term is ‘tihei mauri ora’ which acknowledges the sneeze of life and is symbolic of the newborn



child breathing independently of the mother. When a person is physically and socially well, the mauri is in a state of balance; this is described as mauri tau, meaning the mauri is at peace.²⁸ Within the Mauri Ora framework, mauri is discussed as an intangible construct that is experienced at the most personal level, a personal sense of power and wellbeing that impacts on relationships with everyone around the person.⁶ When considering intimate partner relationships, mauri can be impacted on by the nature of the relationship, either positively or negatively.

Mana

A Māori way of expressing the worth of the human person is to speak of a person's mana, sometimes described as an external expression of influence, power and achievement. Mana reinforces the connection between spiritual, natural and human domains.

“The mana which is the actualization, the realization, of the tapu of the person is threefold; mana tangata, power from the people, mana whenua, power from the land and mana atua, power from our link with the spiritual powers. Each person has this threefold mana”³¹ (p.53).

Mead's (2003)²⁸ writing describes mana as one of the principles underpinning tikanga:

“Every individual Māori is born with an increment of mana which is closely related to personal tapu. While an increment of mana is inherited at birth it is possible to build onto it through one's personal achievements, through good works and an ability to lift the mana of the whole group. Mana is always a social quality that requires other people to recognise one's achievements and accord respect” (p.51).

Mana is an important concept within a Māori worldview when considering whānau violence as it influences our attitudes and behaviour in our treatment of people. There is mana-enhancing behaviour as described above, however at the other end of the continuum there is behaviour which may takahi-mana, or trample on people.¹⁵

“Mana or the pursuit of mana often drives behaviours. It can serve as a motivator for violence and therefore has potential as a means of countering violence by creating wellness as an act of mana”⁶ (p.19).



These six cultural imperatives are important constructs within a Māori worldview, particularly when discussing wellbeing. The knowledge, values and beliefs contained within each one has the potential to inform wellbeing in intimate partner relationships, transform behaviours and provide alternatives to violence. Although much of this writing is located within a traditional framework, it is argued here that these are not historical concepts that are left in the past but are living, evolving processes that currently enable the survival and maintenance of kaupapa Māori within the contemporary world. These principles can guide transformative practices and inform strategies for whānau violence prevention and whānau wellbeing. They can also be seen as protective factors within whānau, hapū and iwi.

In the following section, we discuss some of the fundamental tasks that the Mauri Ora framework supports in the context of the wider community which includes successful collaboration between government and iwi. We discuss the context for whānau violence for Māori and look at the historical and contemporary factors which may affect the traditional protective factors within whānau, hapū and iwi and give some factors that need to be considered when discussing whānau violence intervention and prevention programmes and strategies within practice and policies.

2.2 Collaboration with the wider community

Violence prevention literature suggests a multi-level approach is likely to achieve the best results. The following looks at the beginning of addressing whānau violence in a broader societal context. This section also documents some of the collaborations that are in place. A Māori Reference Group (MRG) was set up within the Ministry of Social Development's Family and Community Services to provide advice and a Māori voice to the government Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families in 2007. The MRG consists of a wide range of people from across the country with expertise in the area of whānau violence. The MRG's overriding aim is to develop a Programme of Action to address whānau violence and to provide a mechanism for Māori and government to work effectively, both together and independently, acknowledging the critical roles of each. The focus is to develop a framework that captured the broader vision and aspirations of Māori and represented a practical, achievable and measurable way of making a difference.²



The first E Tu Whānau-ora Programme of Action for Addressing Family Violence – 2008-2013 provided a framework for addressing issues of violence for Māori over these five years. The MRG actively contributed to the work that flowed from this collaborative Programme of Action. In addition, the Programme of Action established high-level areas to address (see below). The vision of the Programme of Action vision was for whānau ora for all whānau members arising from strength, safety, identity and prosperity and a long term goal of all whānau having healthy, respectful, stable relationships free from violence. The underlining principles were that the implementation of the Programme of Action was Māori-led, whole of whānau, strengths-based with a tikanga foundation and must be inclusive, innovative, sustainable, evidence based, be able to be regionally diverse and collaborative. Of importance to many is the fifth area, “understanding and developing good practice”. What constitutes ‘good practice’ needs to be agreed on, understood, documented and shared. Accordingly, the five first Programme of Action priority areas were:



Leadership

Effective and visionary leadership across all levels of Māoridom founded on a shared commitment to whānau-ora for all whānau.

Changing attitudes and behaviour

All Māori have opportunities to receive relevant and appropriate support, information and education about violence in safe and meaningful contexts (acknowledging the variable time requirements for achieving significant change in attitudes and behaviour for different individuals and whānau).

Ensuring safety and accountability

Māori have access to a wide range of effective processes and services to ensure that victims are safe, to stop perpetrators from re-offending and to promote whānau maintenance and restoration.

Effective support services

All Māori have access to effective, sustainable support services, wherever they live, which are evaluated against a range of agreed success factors, including whānau-ora (well-being) indicators.

Understanding and developing good practice

Service delivery to Māori will be measured against an agreed understanding of what constitutes 'good practice' based on available evidence and agreed 'indicators' for whānau-ora, with ongoing opportunities for the development, trialling and uptake of innovative and promising ideas. This will require research and evaluation (discussed further in this paper).

(For full details, see E Tu Whānau-ora Programme of Action for Addressing Family Violence 2008-2013, pp. 20-29).²

Within this Programme of Action framework, a number of structural risk factors for Māori were prioritised to be addressed, some of which have been discussed above (for full list see Appendix 3 in E Tu Whānau-ora Programme of Action for Addressing Family Violence 2008-2013).²



Priorities for shared initiatives

- A strong focus on working together to improve the wider socio-economic outlook for Māori, particularly around housing, education, employment and health issues – a holistic approach
- Working together to build preventative services
- A need to boost the capacity and capability of service providers – additional funding, better collaboration and use of existing resources, more training, and any auditing / evaluation needs to be credible to Māori (with appropriate knowledge and skills)
- A need to look seriously at why Māori do not engage with justice sector services.
- Investing in improved service provision and effectiveness for Māori victims and offenders

Priorities for government

- Prevention – more investment at the front end – holistic programmes and support to care for wider family, tackling organised crime, investing in sufficient facilities and activities to keep children and young people occupied and happy; easily accessible Māori services to help; addressing poverty; investing in success; facilitating regional coordination
- Early intervention – boost the number and skills of Māori providers, better and earlier access to specialists; promote successful Māori frameworks and interventions; more and better services for men; social structures grounded in tikanga; collaboration-friendly processes and funding; effective screening for risk; making it easier to engage with Māori
- Consistent and ongoing communications – finding effective ways of getting the messages to Māori and reinforcing and sustaining these messages

Investments for government

- Improved resource / funding processes for communities that promote responsiveness and flexibility and take account of increasing demand following raised awareness.
- Improved consistency and safety of government responses (e.g. Police, health and justice systems, Child, Youth and Family)
- Improve the communications and campaigns to get the message to Māori.
- Holistic approaches and services that support and meet families' basic needs.
- Regional planning / local responses and campaigns (links to Community Action Fund, Pathways to Partnership)
- Improved accessibility to sustainable essential services for rural whānau
- Elimination of organised crime – effective strategies for dealing with gangs, keeping marae safe and dealing with causal factors. Censorship – improved understanding of the impact of media violence

Things for government to change or stop funding

- Policies and activities that do not support collaboration but divide whānau and communities
- Consultation for consultation's sake
- Quick-fix programmes
- Programmes that are not effective for Māori
- Inefficiency and duplication of services
- External non-Māori researchers (pp.37-40)².



One of the key themes to emerge was that of a whole-of-whānau focus (p.38). It also addressed some of the structural stressors previously mentioned facing many Māori, including whānau being able to meet basic and fundamental family needs such as education, parenting, health needs and healthy relationships; a focus on solutions that address the wider whānau issues (not just those of the victim and/or perpetrator); ensuring that the safety of women and children is paramount within this focus; the importance of role modelling; and the importance of more men being involved in the solutions for change. Using a whole-of-whānau approach concurs with the view of many other practitioners and academics who work in this field that individual and couple-based interventions may not be so effective for Māori.^{6,8,11}

Some change has occurred over the past five years. The 2013-2018 E Tu Whānau Programme of Action for Addressing Family Violence has reported on progress made from the 2008-2013 Programme of Action, for example an increasing number of iwi across the country taking action by incorporating and prioritising issues and solutions around violence into their strategic planning documents; the Iwi Leaders Group regularly discusses E Tu Whānau actions and solutions, and a wide range of community actions around violence are taking place at whānau, hapū and marae levels. However, it is reported that interactions with key government agencies need to improve. The 2013-2018 Programme of Action³² states:

“In the past (and currently), interactions between whānau and mainstream government agencies have been problematic. There are suggestions of cultural misunderstanding, systemic bias and a lack of knowledge about whānau dynamics and values. Evidence suggests that some Māori choose not to engage with mainstream agencies, even when they are in serious need. It is well-known that there are high levels of under-reporting of family violence incidents by Māori. Family violence data from a number of government organisations, including Child, Youth and Family and the New Zealand Police, highlights the ongoing seriousness of this issue and suggests that Māori need to be working closely with these agencies to find ways to turn these figures around. There have been attempts in recent years to make systemic improvements in some areas, and the Māori Reference Group welcomes the opportunity to contribute to these in future. We would like to emphasise, however, that despite interventions within some government agencies, the family violence figures for Māori remain alarming. We suggest that a serious change of



approach is needed which incorporates measures of accountability to Māori, against which improvement is regularly assessed” (p.12).

In summary, these Programmes of Action (2008-2013 and 2013-2018) sit alongside the work undertaken by the wider government Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families. The vision of the MRG is that all families and whānau have healthy, respectful, stable relationships, free from violence.

E Tu Whānau is also founded on the same strengths-based kaupapa for Māori as the Whānau Ora government initiative, a collaborative initiative between Te Puni Kōkiri, the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Health.² It is important that all sectors work together, are connected and support each other in the journey toward Te Mana Kaha o te Whānau.¹ E Tu Whānau supports the Mauri Ora framework:

“The legitimacy and integration of Māori models and conceptual frameworks is an important feature of E Tu Whānau and the work that flows from it. The Mauri Ora framework, for example, is one practice model that uses a Māori conceptual framework to achieve transformation in the area of whānau violence. The Mauri Ora model is being used with considerable success in our capability development work – providing practitioners with the appropriate skills and tools to work proactively and positively with Māori Whānau” (p.22).

Whilst the government Whānau Ora initiative is in its early stages, it shows a shift and acknowledgement that working collectively (government, non-government organisations and iwi) rather than in isolation from each other may enhance whānau ora (family wellbeing) within our communities.

2.3 Research and evaluation

In the following section, comment is made on the importance of research and evaluation as discussed by Jewkes (2002),³³ Grenell & Cram (2008)¹¹ and Pouwhare (1999).³⁴ It is important in whānau violence prevention strategies and reinforces the need to support and promote kaupapa Māori iwi-based initiatives such as Amokura. Much of the research

¹ Whānau are strong, safe and prosperous, living with a clear sense of identity and cultural integrity, and with control over their destiny – Te Mana Kaha o te Whānau!



related to Māori in the field of whānau violence has been undertaken by non-Māori using deficit and/or pathologising approaches. Māori academics, health, welfare, education and justice professionals argue that models of analysis and intervention methodologies based on Western or mainstream thinking have been consistently ineffective for Māori.^{6,35,36}

“It is argued in the literature that Pākehā programmes have failed to make changes for Māori and that the kaupapa Māori models provide an opportunity to transform the current context of family violence for Māori”⁸ (p.35).

Whānau violence prevention has been viewed for many years using a deficit model, an approach that focuses on the violence and that criminalises and pathologises Māori individuals. However, more recently in Aotearoa Māori have begun to research and examine practices that contribute to the body of knowledge becoming known as whānau ora and the cultural capacities and capabilities which assist extended families to build resiliency, protective factors and processes. Strategies that are based on strengthening whānau are a relatively new phenomenon in the field.¹¹ Some elements may contribute to evolving new definitions about individual and collective experience, as well as help to clarify understandings and explanations in order to create new indigenous frameworks:

“...the attitudes and expressions of violence and its dynamic variables are embedded in learned, transgenerational, cultural values rather than evidence of individual pathology”³⁷ (p.3).

This supports the necessity for indigenous research projects to be informed by a cultural framework for working with violence and violence prevention. A number of key informants working in the field of whānau violence add that it is important to have an indigenous lens for explaining the determinants of violence, with similar reports in literature by other indigenous and First Nations peoples.^{5,38}

A Te Puni Kōkiri literature review on family violence in 2010 followed a similar review conducted by Balzer et al (1997)³ to set priorities in the area of whānau violence for Māori. The point must be made that although there is a growing body of knowledge and literature in the area of family violence for Māori there is still in fact a very small amount of material that is focused on either family violence for Māori or whānau violence.⁸



A 2007 literature review undertaken by Amokura³⁹ indicated that the gaps in research are significant. Each of their identified 'priority' areas requires in-depth research attention: violence and Māori; violence and indigenous peoples; violence and early intervention and prevention; violence and youth; violence and practical activity based models; and violence and traditional healing. A further area that is identified is the concept of 'collective responsibility'.

The Te Puni Kōkiri literature review affirms that to date there is *"no literature or research in the area of family violence for Māori that focuses on these issues, however the concept of Collective responsibility through whakapapa and whānaungatanga are raised continually by Māori working in the area"*⁸ (p.53).

Whānau and collective responses to violence are seen as key to intervening and transforming our current experiences of violence within and against whānau and needs to be a priority area for research. The Second Māori Taskforce expressed concerns that many social policies, strategies and interventions which are government funded are based on research that is framed within a conceptualisation of violence that is based on a dominant Western paradigm.⁶

"There have been limited studies carried out by Māori researchers on what whānau violence is and what it is made up of. Many research studies have attached a Māori component or include a Māori sample but such research is generally not based on Māori concepts or Kaupapa Māori research processes. Nor is it necessarily based on an understanding of the dynamics of whānau violence from inside a Māori conceptual and experiential base... The questions and the way in which information is collected, analysed and reported is designed to validate a Western conceptualisation of violence. This offers limited if any useful information about how to prevent whānau violence. It does not clarify violence in cultural, philosophical, political, historical, social or any other terms for Māori".⁶ (pp.9-10)

In their literature review, Te Puni Kōkiri (2010)⁸ suggests there is a need for a clear research strategy to be developed:

"... much of the research that does exist is in the form of evaluations and therefore has been undertaken as a part of a programme contracting process and not for the specific intention of gaining knowledge and information about the area per se. Having said that those reports are invaluable in gaining insights into the key elements within the models and



programmes currently being practice by Māori practitioners and providers. There remains however a need for a clear research strategy to be developed in the area of family violence for Māori that includes the exploration of each of the key points outlined in this summary".
(p.54)

The gaps referred to in that literature review were broadly identified as:

1. Identifying at which point family violence for Māori became a significant issue and traditional methods were marginalised as a process of dealing collectively with the issue. A small amount of literature suggests up until the early 1900's tikanga Māori and traditional processes prevailed in dealing with violence within whānau. There is no research that indicates at which point family violence for Māori became more prevalent within our communities.
2. Given the growth in hapū and iwi initiatives in the area of whānau violence there is a need to support hapū and iwi to undertake research that is more particular to their own people. There is little research and literature related to specific iwi in terms of whānau violence and how those iwi and hapū engaged with the issues within their own tikanga.
3. There is a growing body of knowledge being shared amongst Māori in terms of conceptual approaches to whānau violence for Māori. The Taskforce work and development of the Mauri Ora framework is a clear example of this. Research is now required in regards to the implementation and practice elements of interventions such as this. Often the 'success' or 'best practice' elements are documented through evaluations processes that are more often than not tied to provider contracts. There is a need for research that is independent of contractual requirements be undertaken with the key objective being one of identifying the critical practices and approaches that Māori practitioners and providers use in order to implement the conceptual framework.
4. A final area that requires attention and documentation is that of the long term experiences of those that participate in the range of kaupapa Māori initiatives such as Mauri Ora. This would include a number of targeted longitudinal studies across the sectors and within whānau including (but not confined to):
 - Long term outcomes for Māori victims of violence in regards to their healing and life opportunities etc
 - Long term outcomes for Māori perpetrators of violence in regards to their healing, life changes and life opportunities
 - Long term outcomes for Māori children and other whānau members who witness violence in regards to their healing, future relationships and life opportunities
 - Long term outcomes in terms of the wellbeing of whānau who have experienced whānau violence (p.182).



Some of these examples could be undertaken within whānau and would therefore give an overall picture of the wellbeing of whānau as a whole and the individuals within the whānau. Te Puni Kōkiri also suggests commencing the process with some form of research/survey of Māori practitioners and providers who work in this field to help ascertain other areas of priority. Former Amokura CEO, Di Grennell, calls in to question the inadequacy of the resources made available for Māori to investigate whānau violence for Māori:

“How can it be when Māori are so disproportionately represented that there was insufficient time or expertise to include us? How can it be that recommendations for future action can be made, recommendations that will impact on us without our involvement?”⁴⁰

3. The context for violence

Whānau violence was understood by the Taskforce to be epidemic because of the magnitude and serious nature of it for whānau, hapū and iwi. It has taken several generations of learned behaviour and practice to entrench whānau violence, and it will take time for whānau violence to be unlearned. Māori acknowledge that whānau violence is an ongoing concern that cannot be tolerated or excused at any level, and that if the high levels of violence are to be addressed, then it is equally important that strategies for change consider the contextual and contributing factors.⁶ A wide range of studies agree that family violence is caused by multiple complex factors, and that it is inextricably linked to issues of power and control. The Taskforce suggested that whānau violence analysis to date is individually oriented, largely ‘service provider’ or ‘researcher’ focused and does not adequately socially, historically, politically or culturally contextualise the abuse of Māori women and children in the context of whānau, hapū and iwi.⁶ For indigenous peoples, such as Māori, loss of cultural identity, isolated and fragmented family systems, weakened traditional mechanisms for support, loss of land, language and self-determination may increase the likelihood of whānau violence.

The causes of whānau violence are acknowledged as complex and as sourced from both historical and contemporary factors.^{2,6,11,17} The Mauri Ora Framework contains an analysis of the impacts of colonisation and identifies the environmental and contextual influences



affecting Māori contemporary realities. It also acknowledges the diversity of Māori and the wide range of processes used to achieve and sustain wellbeing.

It is accepted that family violence occurs across all socio-economic groupings in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is also accepted that social and economic disadvantage impact on the likelihood of someone being affected by family violence.³² The highest rates of partner abuse are found among young families (i.e. co-habiting adults with children) of low socio-economic status.^{41,42} Māori have a large young population⁴³ (Statistics NZ, 2007) and many live in the most deprived parts of Aotearoa New Zealand.⁴³ Within contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori continue to experience significant social and economic disadvantage in relation to income levels, employment, health, education and housing.⁴⁴ These disparities are regarded as some of the major contributing factors to the high rates of partner violence within the Māori population.^{14,42} In their paper 'The Interface between Violence and Whānau',⁴⁵ Cram and Pitama also highlight the grim negative statistics in regards to Māori wellbeing:

*"Māori are the most likely to die early; be unemployed; be imprisoned; be homeless; suffer mental illness; collect a welfare benefit (except for the old age pension which no-one lives long enough to collect). These issues are not new. They are issues that were raised over twenty years in two key reports, (i) 'Pūao Te Atatū' and (ii) The Royal Commission on Social Policy. Both reports challenged a nationwide failure to respond to appropriately to the issues facing Māori people."*⁴⁵

There are risk factors for children being exposed to family violence and the intergenerational cycles of violence. The attainment of Māori family well-being (whānau ora) will be made more difficult by these risk factors. However they do not predetermine violence in all cases. It is important to note that the majority of Māori children and young people are not maltreated but are loved and nurtured.⁸

These facts are also not a reflection on indigenous culture per se;¹⁹ the literature suggests that with colonisation came the introduction of 'disorder' and 'dis-ease' to traditional Māori structures.^{6,11,36,46}



3.1 Historical factors

The impact of colonisation also needs to be considered in order to respond effectively to whānau violence.^{2,6,11,14,36,39,46-50} *“This is not a new concept as it has been asserted by a range of academics and experts in the field of family violence, both Māori and non-Māori for over 40 years”⁸ (p.14).* Pihama, Jenkins & Middleton (2003)³⁶ describe the impact of colonisation on Māori society in relation to whānau violence, the breakdown of Māori structures, the imposition of the nuclear family and the reconstruction of whānau and gender roles and relations.

Robertson & Oulton (2008)¹⁴ discuss the societal level risk factors that contribute to violence that support this view. They argue that: *“colonisation introduced a patriarchal ideology, redefined the roles of women and undermined certain cultural practices which were protective...” (p.10).* Unlike Western women, Māori women were not their spouse’s ‘chattel’ or subordinate but an intrinsic part of whānau, hapū and iwi. Colonisation ‘disordered’ the role and status of Māori women,⁴⁶ with colonial structures and ideologies replacing Māori structures, in particular knowledge of whānau, hapū and iwi.⁵⁰ *“Missionary schooling imported a colonial notion of ‘family’ which was promoted within Māori communities as ‘the model’ of civilisation”⁸ (p.16)* which contributed to the fragmentation of whānau.

Western^j gender role-norms imported into Aotearoa New Zealand positioned women as submissive to men, and placed men in positions of power and authority. This impacted on Māori social structures including the formation and maintenance of intimate partner relationships.¹⁵ Traditional Māori gender roles and relationships were viewed as more complementary in nature.

“The relationship between mana wahine and mana tane is about complementarity (sic) and reciprocity. For example, strictly speaking, a man cannot go onto a marae without a woman, and a woman cannot go onto a marae without a man, simply because of the complimentary roles that men and women play in the ritual of

^j It is acknowledged that not all Western cultures are alike. In this paper, Western gender roles are defined as in Western gender role literature. Colonisation lead to the introduction of these roles in Aotearoa (see Lerner, 1987,⁵¹ Rose, 2012¹⁹).



*encounter on our marae. Te kawa o te marae embraces and upholds both mana wahine and mana tane*⁵² (p.31).

Amongst Māori iwi, where women's economic contributions and work were valued commensurate with men's, violence against women was not common.^{16,53,54} An increase in violence against women came with colonisation.^{14,53-55}

*"Targeting the relatively high status of many indigenous women as problematic, colonisers imposed notions of gender roles based on patriarchy and individualism which led to the devaluation of the position women held in Māori iwi (Balzer et al, 1997) and in Native American tribes"*¹⁹ (p.4).

Patriarchal culture over time has become accepted as normal and natural,⁵¹ legitimising discrimination and violence against women.⁵⁶ In today's society many Māori men are exposed to, and subsequently influenced more, by dominant non-Māori forms of masculinity.⁵⁷ In a recent article discussing an indigenous approach to masculinity and male violence for Māori men⁵⁸ the following was offered:

"...we need to advance a new approach to decolonisation, to masculinity, to the validation of our indigenous ways and to appreciating 'nga matauranga Māori' in support of meaningful Māori men's education and mentoring group work" (p.35).

In Aotearoa New Zealand, Yuen and White (2007)⁵⁹ found that young men from minority and marginalised cultures in New Zealand were enabled to move from violence to non-violence through work to help them identify positive values, and connecting them to important figures in their families, histories, or culture. In this way *"a space can be opened to deconstruct dominant forms of masculinity"* (p.188). Colonisation gives a framework for understanding the contemporary context for Māori whānau being at risk of whānau violence, but it should not be an excuse for violence.¹¹ In addition to being a framework for understanding whānau violence, some of the literature suggests that colonisation is an underpinning reason for such violence:

*"There is no historical support for claims that traditional Maori society tolerated violence and abuse towards children and women, or that some members of the group were lesser value than others..."*⁶⁰ (p.208).



3.2 Whānau and family structures

The Native Schools system contributed to the undermining of Māori structures as did Missionary teachings, in particular with the reconstruction of gender roles and the movement of whānau to a nuclear family structure as mentioned above. This occurred at both policy and curriculum level:

“Curriculum content was constructed to achieve the domestication of Māori girls. Māori girls were expected to learn the 'appropriate' values and skills of 'civilised young ladies' and this task was linked explicably to the expectation that they would be considered more suitable and attractive to men; Māori men. The marginalisation of Māori girls and women, through Pākehā schooling, occurred systematically through the imposition of domestication and assimilation agendas. Māori girls and women were taught domestic skills which often included the making of clothing for the school, cooking, washing, ironing, embroidery and other skills deemed appropriate for girls...for Māori boys it was the knowledge of agriculture...”³⁶ (p.18).

Where the entrenchment of the nuclear family models was instrumental in the attack on Māori structures and gender organisation, the affirmation of the whānau can in turn challenge colonial construction of gender¹⁸ and mediate the impact of colonisation:

“Engaging in a process of de-colonisation, many colonised peoples are examining what has been stripped away and what may be useful to reclaim as the best of their culture’s traditions. Māori organisations and scholars are emphasising the traditional obligation and power of the whānau to protect all its members; women, children, and men from harm (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2010). Likewise, many Native American tribes and associations are creating training manuals for both Native men and women that emphasise cultural traditions of respect for women”¹⁹ (p. 4).

The literature indicates that whānau is a cultural structure that was enabling for Māori “as it provided a process of nurturing, education, and sustenance on all levels, within all domains. The roles of whānau in Kaupapa Māori initiatives is essential in that it affirms the roles and obligations that we as Māori have as a collective group”³⁶ (p.41).

Thus the roles of whānau are roles that are worthy of cultivating if things are going to change. The healthy functioning whānau provided a safe haven for women and children as



it was relatively open and ‘public’, at least to hapū and iwi, and provided a base and support.³⁶ It is also identified in the literature that although whānau can be a system of healing,^{2,6,8,36} it should not to be taken idealistically as relationships within whānau can be complex and the need to ensure safety within the whānau is essential.

3.3 The disconnect between indigenous communities and mainstream interventions

Globally, mainstream approaches to reducing the levels of family violence in indigenous communities have consistently been identified as being problematic.^{8,36,61-67} Within Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori academics, health, welfare, education and justice professionals also argue that models of analysis and intervention methodologies based on Western or mainstream thinking have been consistently ineffective for Māori. In the field of family violence, this includes analysis of violence focusing on individual survivors and perpetrators, and is seen as having only limited application to Māori families and communities.^{2,6,35,36}

At the present time, services will often respond to people as individuals in isolation from their families, communities and social context. One way that this has come about is through an emphasis on the assessment of individual pathology and deficits. Māori service providers in the area of whānau violence have identified that the application of a mainstream framework to whānau violence policy and services:

- Failed to recognise the negative impact of colonisation on whānau, hapū and iwi;
- Endorsed interventions focused on concepts of individual harm, as opposed to whānau, hapū and iwi development and well-being;
- Created barriers to flexibility within programme provision;
- Failed to recognise the importance of addressing issues such as systemic violence and the endemic nature and acceptance of family and whānau violence within communities;
- Failed to value prior learning amongst Māori providers; and
- Did not recognise the value of Māori methods and models.⁶⁸

A number of indigenous communities concur, voicing concern with Western/mainstream approaches as discriminatory and repeating the kinds of violence inherent in the policies and practices of colonisation.^{11,69-72} The literature from studies with indigenous and First



Nations peoples in Australia, North America and Canada indicate that many were sceptical of the ability of the justice and legal systems to be able to manage the violence they were experiencing. This concern is not unfounded; in some cases more violence or the removal of their children was the outcome for involving such agencies.³⁸ Kruger et al (2004)⁶ suggest that if whānau violence interventions continue to be delivered from a Pākehā conceptual and practice framework that isolates, criminalises and pathologies individuals, nothing will change.

Many indigenous specific programs and models have arisen as a consequence of the inadequate mainstream responses.^{5,6,38} Through colonisation and the subsequent loss of cultural knowledge, identity and practices, the breakdown and dysfunction of whānau, hapū and iwi many cultural practices and values have been devalued and marginalised.^{6,11}

For the past two decades there has been a growing recognition of the need for a structural analysis of family violence, alongside the endorsement of the need for holistic Māori models of prevention and intervention. From the family violence literature, the need for initiatives that challenge community acceptance of family violence as normal has emerged. It is a growing community 'zero tolerance for violence' that supports and sustains other programmes and services that work to alleviate violence from individual to community to societal levels.¹¹ Initiatives and programmes aimed at the prevention of and successful intervention in whānau violence need to incorporate and recognise Māori values and concepts, and respond to the diverse and specific needs of whānau, hapū and iwi.¹⁷ They also need to build on the capacity of whānau, hapū and iwi to resolve family violence issues within their own communities. However, this emphasis on community needs to acknowledge that the communities asked to lead change *"are also the public spaces where the attitudes, beliefs and systems that normalize violence flourish and reproduce"*⁷³. (p.6)

3.4 Summary

When redressing the impact of historical and contemporary factors that have impacted on violence with in Māori whānau, the failure of Western models and frameworks to address whānau violence, Māori have looked at traditional concepts to improve outcomes for whānau, hapū and iwi. It was in this climate that the Second Māori Taskforce developed



the Mauri Ora framework and the Amokura Family Violence Prevention Consortium was established.

4. The need for a multi-level approach to violence prevention – Amokura, an example of the use of the Mauri Ora framework

The Amokura initiative is an example of a multi-level approach to whānau violence prevention. Multi-level approaches are likely to achieve the best results in violence prevention.¹¹ Robertson & Oulton (2008)¹⁴ suggest that this could happen at an individual level where the aim is to strengthen individual knowledge and skills, and, at a community level where the aim is to promote community ownership and strategies to address the issue. In 2002, the Ministry of Health⁷⁴ used a population/ecological model of whānau violence to build a multi-level picture of risk factors for whānau violence. These factors began to address whānau violence within a broader societal context.¹¹ The causes of whānau violence are acknowledged as complex and as sourced from both historical and contemporary factors. This move to a more complex understanding of family violence is reiterated by Jewkes (2002)³³ and Pouwhare (1999).³⁴ Jewkes' (2002)³³ review of the international literature on intimate partner violence saw the need for five prevention strategies:

1. Creating a climate of non-tolerance of intimate partner violence
2. Empowering women and improving their status in society
3. Reducing use of violence
4. Changing community norms
5. Research and monitoring

Similarly, Pouwhare (1999)³⁴ recommended that whānau, hapū and iwi need to implement a 'zero tolerance' to violence in order to dismantle the attitudes and behaviours that allow whānau violence to occur. This is seen as 'foundational' to the social sustainability of family violence and intervention activities.⁷⁵

"It has also been advocated that the initiatives aimed at the prevention of Māori family violence need to: incorporate Māori values and concepts (Leahy, 1999); 'recognise and provide for the diverse and specific needs of whānau, hapū and iwi' (Ministry of Social Development, 2002, p.15); and 'build the capacity of whānau,



hapū and iwi to resolve family violence issues within their own communities' (ibid)⁷¹ (p.3).

The Mauri Ora framework reinforces a multi-level approach to the analysis and practice of violence prevention for Māori whānau and communities. The Framework, with its multi-level approach to whānau violence prevention, has a strong alignment with current indigenous approaches to violence prevention, many of which use ecological frameworks to analyse, report and practice. In addition, it is founded on cultural constructs and requires the inclusion of historical perspectives, which are necessary to accurately understand the current context in work with Māori and indigenous peoples. Mauri ora is the goal of the framework, which works towards the goal of whānau ora (wellbeing) and has been defined as the wellbeing of whānau (acknowledging individuality within the whānau collective), hapū and iwi.

4.1 Fundamental tasks of the Mauri Ora framework

Social change will be enhanced by building coalitions. There is also a need to target organisational practices, policies, and legislation. At a community level, the aim is to promote community ownership of the issue. At an individual level, the aim is to strengthen individual knowledge and skills. Family violence literature advocates challenging community acceptance that family violence is normal. It is a growing community 'zero tolerance' for violence that supports and sustains other programmes and services that work to alleviate violence from individual to community to societal levels. It is within this policy and practice environment that the Amokura initiative was implemented in Te Tai Tokerau.⁷⁶

The following describes one coalition between iwi and government for social change, however these coalitions need to be sustainable and require more commitment from government. Amokura, the internationally recognised strategic initiative designed to strengthen the family violence sector and reduce social tolerance of violence, ceased to operate in June 2011 due to government re-appropriation of funding to frontline services.⁷⁷

The Amokura Family Violence Prevention Consortium (the Consortium) was a collaboration of Te Tai Tokerau iwi led by Chief Executive Officers of seven iwi authorities for the region; Te Aupouri, Te Rārawa, Ngāti Kahu, Whaingaroa, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Wai and Ngāti Whātua provided an example of strategic leadership and practices informed by the

Mauri Ora framework. The need to strengthen whānau, as alternatives to individual or couple approaches to intervening in family violence, and to understand ‘whānau’ as opposed to ‘family’ underpinned Amokura’s strategies:

“Designed to achieve positive outcomes by focussing on ‘whānau ora’ (family well-being), rather than on family violence per se’ (Grennell & Cram, 2008, p. 5), Amokura is a collective response to family violence overseen by a consortium of seven iwi authorities. The strategy received international recognition in 2009 for its innovative approach to addressing domestic violence and was awarded the Annual Human Rights Prize from the Leitner Centre, New York”¹⁹ (p.5).

The Amokura initiative was developed by the Consortium to be consistent with their focus on early intervention and prevention of whānau violence, as well as being consistent with the Mauri Ora framework. The Consortium’s values underpinning this included:⁷⁸

- Being the leading advocate for issues related to zero tolerance to violence within Māori whānau in Te Tai Tokerau
- Focusing on the “positiveness” (*sic*) of promoting zero tolerance to whānau violence and the need for quality services that are appropriate, affordable and available to all
- Maintaining good practice and aspire to best practice in service delivery
- Providing credible, honest and accurate information
- Recognising the value of each individual and respect diversity.

Amokura provided strategic leadership using a whole of population approach to address whānau violence prevention through four projects: community awareness and education; research; advocacy; and provider development and training. The Consortium worked towards the goal of whānau, hapū and iwi wellbeing using the Mauri Ora framework. Within the Framework, three fundamental tasks were identified by the Taskforce as underpinning a conceptual framework for achieving whānau well-being:

- dispel the illusion (at individual and collective levels) that whānau violence is normal, acceptable and culturally valid
- remove opportunities for whānau violence to be perpetrated through education for the empowerment and liberation of whānau, hapū and iwi



- teach transformative practices based on Māori cultural imperatives that provide alternatives to violence⁶ (p.5).

The following^k are some practice examples of how the Mauri Ora framework informed Amokura activities to increase whānau wellbeing and work towards reducing and preventing whānau violence within Te Tai Tokerau.

Dispelling the illusion

Whānau and community awareness

Amokura focused on a range of whānau and community activities that worked to dispel the illusion that violence is normal and acceptable. Kruger et al (2004)⁶ describe the illusion as:

“People who commit violence are under the illusion that what they do is okay. The illusion is given life by opportunities to commit violence and so it validates itself. The helplessness or indifference of others sustains violence” (p.11).

Family violence prevention literature advocates community awareness raising as central to transforming the attitudes and behaviours that support family violence to continue. In 2010, the World Health Organization⁷⁹ identified “changing cultural and social norms that support violence” as one of their seven key evidence based strategies towards preventing violence. Further, they report that “social marketing initiatives have emerging evidence to show their effectiveness to modify social norms” (p.2).

‘Step Back’ was an Amokura whānau violence prevention message, communicated primarily through the medium of radio jingles, music (predominantly hip hop which was the most popular genre with young people) and community concerts (one attended by 1600 people). The ‘Step Back’ brand invited people to step back and think before acting, and to take responsibility for the choices they made. The ‘Step Back’ brand encouraged young people to participate in declaring that whānau violence is unacceptable and provided messages with positive alternatives to violent behaviour. Te Tai Tokerau has a high

^k Moana Eurera provided the applications of the Mauri Ora Framework within Amokura. Moana was contracted by Amokura to deliver and develop provider development and training.



population of Māori, a total of 43,527 people at the 2006 census and of that number approximately 50% were under 24 years. Therefore, Te Tai Tokerau Māori youth were a key population group to influence the positive, long-term transformation of Māori communities in preventing violence.

Removing opportunities

Strengthening whānau wellbeing

Amokura maintained the belief that iwi are the enduring political base for social organisation in Te Tai Tokerau and the consistent high level advocate for the well-being of all those who live there.⁷⁸ As a result Amokura strategies had the goal of strengthening whānau wellbeing in a broad and innovative range of ways, thus contributing to reducing or removing opportunities for violence to occur. One practical example of Amokura work towards strengthening whānau wellbeing was the production of a whānau resource book called 'Aroha in Action'. This resource was produced to give whānau practical information and advice on:

- how to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all whānau members, especially children
- the impact of violence and abuse
- how to enact the belief that violence is unacceptable and not culturally valid
- how to act and know if violence is or has occurred.

The resource was used by whānau themselves, by professionals and non-government organisations in their work with whānau.

Transformative practices

Kaupapa Māori approaches

Māori have for many years advocated that tikanga Māori provides a basis for understanding our current context and that within tikanga, frameworks exist for both analysing and transforming our current realities, including whānau violence. These frameworks are grounded in the notion that te reo and tikanga Māori are both valid and



legitimate, and provide us with both the conceptual understandings and practices to bring about change for Māori.^{6,11,15,27}

“There is confidence that more tikanga based approaches which restore cultural protective factors within whānau will progress the whānau violence prevention kaupapa for Te Tai Tokerau. This includes support and reaffirmation of those kaumātua, kuia and leaders who have positive roles within their whānau and communities as guardians of tikanga, leaders of whānau and models for ‘tika’ behaviour.”⁸⁰

Service provider development and increased capacity and capability are regarded as highly important in violence prevention strategies around the world.⁸ Amokura offered a range of kaupapa Māori wānanga (workshops) and training focused on workforce development for practitioners and volunteers working with whānau affected by violence. The aim was to provide appropriate, quality professional development and training for Māori and others practitioners in response to need.

The objectives were:¹¹

- Volunteers, whānau and community empowered to participate in family violence prevention and early intervention
- Increased capability of the non-dedicated workforce to practice early intervention and prevention across all areas of service delivery to whānau
- Increased pool of dedicated whānau violence workers
- Increased capability of providers in identified priority areas of evaluation and supervision (p.7).

Professional development and training were seen as essential components of ensuring that the early warning signs of family violence are recognised and responded to. Those identified as being in positions to recognise such signs and therefore in need for training, experience and guidelines were “first contact kaimahi, volunteers, kaumātua, and kuia”⁷⁸ (p.12).

Amokura developed a wānanga series that led to a National Certificate Social Services – Abuse, Violence and Neglect, which was reviewed by Te Kaiawhina Ahumahi (the Social



Services Industry Training Organisation (ITO)). More than 80 Māori practitioners throughout Te Tai Tokerau graduated with this qualification and used the knowledge and skills within their work, their communities, but most importantly within their own whānau. This kaupapa Māori training and its development was delivered in conjunction with providers, often on marae, often linked to community occasions and was based on the cultural imperatives as explained in Table 2 below.



Table 2: Imperative definitions and applications¹

Imperative	Definition and application
Whakapapa	Mauri Ora framework working definition – “kinship that determines the collectivity between whānau, hapū, iwi; collective consciousness”
	Practice example from Amokura wānanga Whakapapa was practiced as a tool for engagement at the wānanga including to establish and strengthen connections between wānanga participants and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the history of the local area • the marae where the wānanga was being held • participants with each other • the content of the wānanga based on Te Tai Tokerau pūkōrero informing the practices
Tikanga	Mauri Ora Framework working definition – “the practice of Māori beliefs and values; collective practice”
	Practice example from Amokura wānanga Tikanga was practiced to establish and guide safe learning processes and behavioural boundaries for the wānanga. For example when stories of violence were shared by practitioners at the wānanga the tikanga process was to have whakawātea or a clearing process or ritual to support the practitioner to respectfully release any concerns and move forward.
Wairua	Mauri Ora framework working definition – “Spirituality expressed as awareness of wairua and passion for life; self-realisation”
	Practice example from Amokura wānanga The wānanga supported practitioners at the wānanga to understand the kahupo and ora continuum of wellbeing. If a person is in a state of kahupo their wairua or spirit is disconnected from the other parts of the person. This can occur for many reasons but usually is the result of a violation. Once this is recognised the practitioner can then support healing to occur. Examples and scenarios of kahupo were shared and discussed.
Tapu	Mauri Ora Framework working definition – “brings us to a state of our own knowing; self-esteem”
	Practice example from Amokura wānanga The wānanga supported practitioners to understand tapu in its three forms in order to work with people affected by violence or perpetrators of the violence. These states include: the sacredness of a person, the total wellbeing of a person and the system of restrictions to protect the tapu of people. All people who have been impacted or inflicted violence have had their tapu violated and as a result need healing to restore the tapu. A practitioner must know how to recognise these states and the healing processes to support restoration.

¹ This table was supplied by Moana Eruera who developed and led the National Certificate in Social Services – Abuse, Violence and Neglect for Amokura.



Mauri	Mauri Ora Framework working definition “inner values; sense of power, influence and identity”
	Practice example from Amokura wānanga Mauri can be described as the life force and when a person is physically and socially well their mauri is balanced and their mood and external expression of this is positive. When practitioners are working with whānau impacted by violence there is often an imbalance in mauri that manifests itself and is expressed in negative and unhealthy ways. The wānanga supported practitioners to discuss and practice the concept of mauri within their work.
Mana	Mauri Ora Framework working definition – “outer values; external expression of achievement, power and influence”
	Practice example from Amokura wānanga A Māori way of expressing the worth of a human person is to speak of a person’s mana, expressed through their achievements towards reaching their potential. Within whānau violence the perpetrator diminishes their own mana by violating the tapu of others. The practitioner works with the perpetrator to understand the effect of their acts and the impact of that. The wānanga supported practitioners to understand how to work with others using behaviours that enhance others’ mana.

Iwi providers have argued that Wellington-derived family violence policy and funding is mismatched to the needs and aspirations of whānau.¹¹ Amokura identified the limitations of mainstream approaches to whānau violence already discussed in this paper, and took the opportunity for “*co-ordinated review and contributions to strategic policy development and for exerting influence on key regional agencies and groups to ensure good outcomes*” by providing advocacy in a number of areas.



The aims of the advocacy project:⁴⁰

- To establish the Consortium as the expert base to advocate for prevention of, and early intervention in family violence
- Advocate for non-violence by utilising and building on established relationships. These occur at multiple levels ranging from local providers of services and local communities and schools through to national forums where decisions are being made about initiatives to address Māori whānau violence and family violence more generally through to international forums where the approach being taken by Amokura can be show-cased and subjected to peer review
- Recognition and support of existing local initiatives in this area, including providing them with tools for their own advocacy purposes
- A clear policy of not competing with local service providers for contracts, and this has contributed to the development of trusting and collaborative relationships
- Research and policy information widely distributed by Amokura, locally and nationally, through a range of networks (pp.7-8).

The three project areas of advocacy, education and promotion, and professional development and training were informed by the research project activities undertaken by Amokura. Three research projects were developed with the aim of increasing knowledge about whānau ora through undertaking 'by Māori' strengths-based research. The research project saw the production of a literature review and annotated bibliography³⁹ which is cited in a number of policy documents on whānau violence prevention; research with tāne about transformation from violence;⁵⁷ kaumātua and kuia perceptions of orange whānau;⁸¹ and the 'Vision: Rangatahi Digital Photography Project, Whānau Oranga Series'.⁸²

The Consortium required commitment from the tribal councils and organisations to being violence-free. A draft policy on zero tolerance to violence was also distributed to the iwi authorities. In 2005, five of the seven iwi authorities involved in the Consortium had adopted their own policies, based on the drafted policy from Amokura. This platform also enabled the Consortium to advocate at a national level, with the mandate of their tribal councils, for an amendment to our legislation that would repeal section 59 of the *Crimes Act 1961* and thereby remove the legal justification for child assault.¹¹



Evaluation of the Amokura Family Violence Consortium was seen as an important process within each of the projects and is briefly summarised below:

“The evaluation of Amokura as a Comprehensive Community Initiative has facilitated the acknowledgement of the ‘ripple-out’ effects of Amokura project initiatives – from individual and whānau participants to the whole of the Northland community. This approach sits well with an understanding that the prevention of whānau violence needs to include strategies for changing community norms to ones of zero tolerance for violence (Jewkes, 2002; Pouwhare, 1999). The Consortium’s commitment to the Mauri Ora framework also means that the fundamental task of ‘dispelling the illusion’ is sourced from within the Māori world but offered as a koha (gift) to the whole of the Tai Tokerau community (Kruger et al, 2004)”¹¹ (p.9).

The closure of Amokura however has seen frontline providers and family violence prevention networks without advocacy, research, training, education and promotion services, reducing the multi-level approach to whānau violence prevention. A spokesperson for the Consortium (Naida Glavish) gave this comment:⁷⁷

"Amokura was never intended to be the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff; and we'd never compete for funding with the frontline services we were set up to support. As a preventative initiative, Amokura is unique in bringing seven Iwi together, standing arm-in-arm at the top of the cliff to turn our whānau back from the edge. The loss of Government funding means our momentum is stalled, but the Consortium remains fully committed to keeping the mana and kaupapa of Amokura alive."

The internationally recognised Amokura Family Violence Consortium, using the Mauri Ora framework, provided a successful approach to the analysis and practice of violence prevention for Māori and communities. It aligns with other indigenous frameworks and the many of the strategies outlined in the World Health Organization’s 2010 report, *Violence Prevention: the Evidence*.⁷⁹ The report identified “changing cultural and social norms that support violence” as one of their key evidence based strategies towards preventing violence. Amokura also saw the successful collaboration of government and iwi and offered an alternative kaupapa Māori framework to address the high levels of violence in Northland. It is a shame it was so short lived. Government policies and strategies in the



prevention of whānau violence may need to reconsider their commitment and understanding of what is needed to assist to curb the ‘epidemic’ of family violence.

4.2 Summary

The Mauri Ora framework underpinned the work of the Amokura Family Violence Prevention Consortium. Namely, it promoted a zero tolerance of violence – dispelling the illusion at a community and an individual level that violence is normal or acceptable; provided information to strengthen whānau knowledge of violence thus reducing or removing the opportunities for violence to occur; and supported service providers to develop and increase their capabilities and capacity when working with whānau violence. Amokura provided a whole of population approach to addressing whānau violence prevention through their four project areas – research, education and community awareness, professional development, and training and advocacy. It saw the successful collaboration of government and iwi in offering an alternative kaupapa Māori framework in which to address whānau violence.

5. Conclusion

This paper has highlighted the need for alternative prevention and intervention strategies to curb the ‘epidemic’ of family violence within Aotearoa New Zealand. It has offered one framework, the Mauri Ora framework for consideration and has discussed the collaborations between government and iwi that have shown some success. The paper points out the need to contextualise whānau violence within the history of violence within Aotearoa New Zealand; provide some context for violence within whānau, hapū and iwi; discuss the effects of colonisation; and consider and address current structural risks for Māori, which make violence more likely. Also highlighted in the literature has been the failure of Western frameworks when working with whānau violence. Considering other frameworks and models to address this issue is essential, frameworks which are based on strengthening whānau rather than those based solely on individuals or couple-based approaches.

The Mauri Ora framework has been used within iwi strategic plans and by service providers and practitioners. Kaupapa Māori models are critical to making change in the current context related to whānau violence. Whakapapa and whānau are central to



relationships and therefore there is a need to ensure programmes and interventions include whānau, hapū and Māori community responses. Tikanga Māori provides a conceptual framework through which whānau violence can be addressed. There is also a need for clearly developed research strategies that enable in-depth, strengths-based research to be undertaken in a number of key areas as discussed above. For example: there remains a lack of knowledge about whether existing programmes are effectively responding to and reducing family violence in the communities in which they operate. This situation comes from a minimal investment in evaluation processes.⁷¹ Prevention and intervention are consistently identified in the literature as in need of two things, research and funding. These areas should not be competing with each other, as in the case of the Amokura Family Violence Prevention Consortium. Both prevention and intervention strategies need to be promoted and adequately resourced, over a time frame long enough to achieve change. Ensuring safety and accountability are the priorities in any measures taken to prevent whānau and family violence at all levels of society. Multi-level approaches to family violence prevention and intervention are more likely to achieve the best results. Lessons learned from research review, those consulted as part of the preparation of this paper, and the case study of Amokura, include the importance of having:

- Māori population based responses that complement the work of Māori and other community-based intervention services;
- Government agencies working in close collaboration with iwi organisations to facilitate the implementation of Māori whānau violence prevention initiatives that meet the needs, priorities and aspirations of iwi;
- Funding sufficient to (a) engage leaders and staff who have the nationally and locally recognised skills to ensure successful implementation of violence prevention initiatives, and (b) to allow for local consultation and subsequent responsiveness in planned activities and projects;
- Support for capacity building opportunities for both prevention and intervention staff, including opportunities for networking, advocacy, and training.
- Māori violence prevention initiatives that are funded for research and evaluation in a way that builds local knowledge within a Māori worldview.



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